Fact Sheet Update April 2003

Los Angeles Academy

(Formerly Jefferson New Middle School)

DEPARTMENT OF TOXIC SUBSTANCES CONTROL

Soil Remedial Investigation Completed

DTSC is one of six Boards and Departments within the California Environmental Protection Agency. The Department's mission is to restore, protect and enhance the environmental quality and economic vitality, by regulating hazardous waste, conducting and overseeing cleanups, and developing and promoting pollution prevention.

State of California

California Environmental Protection Agency

The new Soil Vapor Extraction System installed at Los Angeles Academy is cleaning up underground chemicals.

After years of extensive testing and analysis, the Shallow Soil Remedial Investigation for the Los Angeles Academy, located at 644 East 56th Street in Los Angeles, is now complete. The Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) has approved the environmental investigation report for the shallow soil (surface to 40 feet deep) concluding that the school is safe for students and faculty.

This fact sheet will:

- Tell you about the Remedial Investigation findings;
- Update you on the continuing environmental cleanup action for the protection of the groundwater beneath the school; and
- Tell you about the deep soil investigation that is under way.

The DTSC is the lead regulatory agency overseeing the investigation at this school and continues to oversee onsite activities of the responsible parties (Jefferson Site PRP Group LLC).

SHALLOW SOIL INVESTIGATION FINDINGS

The Remedial Investigation analyzed soils at the school site from the surface down to 40 feet below the ground. More than 5,000 soil samples were collected and analyzed as part of the studies at the Los Angeles Academy.

Since 1998, three Health Risk Assessments have been conducted to evaluate potential health risks to children and adults posed by exposure to chemical contamination at Los Angeles Academy. All of those early health risk studies concluded that the site does not pose a health risk to students, staff, or to nearby residents. A fourth recently approved Health Risk Assessment has again reconfirmed the school is safe.

The energy challenge facing California is real. Every Californian needs to take immediate action to reduce energy consumption. For a list of simple ways you can reduce demand and cut your energy costs, see our web site at www.dtsc.ca.gov.

DEEP SOIL AND GROUNDWATER CLEANUP

Early investigations onsite found significant chemical contamination in the deep soil (40-145 feet deep) and groundwater, which is presently about 145 feet below the ground. This groundwater is not used for drinking water. The underground contamination poses no risk to the students above, but it could potentially be harmful to the environment if it were to seep down into the drinking water table, which is about 500 feet below ground.

In 1997, a soil treatment unit called a Soil Vapor Extraction System was installed to cleanup underground contamination deep beneath the Administration Building. Soil Vapor Extraction systems draw chemicals in vapor form out of the contaminated soil and filter the contamination from the vapor before releasing it into the air. The initial system did not adequately meet air quality standards and was shut down.

A new, more efficient soil vapor extraction system was installed and has been operating for six months. The new system's filtering equipment was installed in the maintenance yard away from students and staff. The new larger system, which was approved by DTSC, has four times greater filtering capacity. The operations of this system are closely monitored by the DTSC and the South Coast Air Quality Management District. The system has multiple safety backups and the emissions from the system are safe. More detailed information on how soil vapor extraction systems operate can be found at this web site: http://sve.ucdavis.edu/index.htm.

NEXT STEPS

The school's soil vapor extraction system will continue to be monitored on a monthly basis to ensure it is operating effectively. Future investigations at the Los Angeles Academy will focus on investigating deep soils below 40 feet underground and on the groundwater.

WHERE TO FIND SITE DOCUMENTS

The Remedial Investigation Report for Los Angeles Academy describes the site investigation and its findings in detail, and how we looked at the possible health risks. All the technical documents about this site are available for public viewing at the following locations:

Vernon Branch Public Library
4504 S. Central Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90011
(323) 234-9106

Los Angeles Academy Middle School Library
644 E. 56th Street
Los Angeles, CA 90011
(323) 232-7820

DTSC Regional Records Office
1011 N. Grandview Avenue
Glendale, CA 91201
Contact: Jone Barrio / (818) 551-2886

WHO TO CALL FOR INFORMATION

If you have any questions about the cleanup or other project activities please call the following persons at our agency: Rao Akula, DTSC Project Manager, at (818) 551-2847; or Treva Miller, Public Participation Specialist, at (818) 551-2846. *Si desea información en español, Javier Hinojosa, Jefe de Unidad de Escuelas del DTSC, al (818) 551-2172.* For media inquiries, please call Jeanne Garcia, DTSC Public Information Officer at (818) 551-2176. For information about DTSC see our web site at ***www.dtsc.ca.gov*.**

If you have any questions about the deep soil investigation work schedule or activities, please contact Thomas Watson, Project Manager, Los Angeles Unified School District, Office of Environmental Health and Safety, at (213) 633-8242.

HEARING IMPAIRED INDIVIDUALS

TDD users can use the California Relay Service at (1-888-877-5378) to reach DTSC Public Participation Specialist, Treva Miller, at (818) 551-2846.